



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2004-027

WHEREAS, portions of New Mexico have experienced mild drought conditions since 1996;

WHEREAS, drought conditions intensified during the extremely dry winters of 2001, 2002, and 2003, with large portions of New Mexico experiencing severe to extreme drought conditions;

WHEREAS, all but two New Mexico reservoirs are currently at below average levels, with most at well below average storage levels;

WHEREAS, it will take several years of significantly higher than normal levels of precipitation and snow pack to allow for current reservoir storage to recover to levels that will satisfy all demands;

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service and Natural Resource Conservation Service's coordinated mid-April snow pack runoff forecast projects below to well below normal runoff volumes for all but the Pecos River basin;

WHEREAS, present composite snow pack levels for all basins in the state are significantly lower than the thirty year averages for those areas;

WHEREAS, runoff into some major streams is expected to be as low as 34% of normal;

WHEREAS, five-year precipitation deficits are significant throughout most of New Mexico, with the worst conditions in the Jemez, Sangre de Cristo, and northern Sacramento Mountains;

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service believes that long-term trends indicate that the State may continue to be in a period of prolonged drought;

WHEREAS, 64% of range land is currently in poor or very poor condition;

WHEREAS, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Vegetation Health Index throughout 2003 showed a high level of stress on range and farm land throughout the State;

WHEREAS, it may take a considerable amount of precipitation and snow melt runoff to return the soil moisture conditions and vegetation health to reasonable levels;

WHEREAS, fire conditions are expected to reach a critical stage in many areas of the state this spring and summer;

WHEREAS, compliance with Endangered Species Act may be compromised by the drought;

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Drought Monitoring Work Group has recommended that emergency conditions have been met in all of the state's eight climate divisions;

WHEREAS, all indications are that drought conditions are not likely to abate in the near future and may worsen; and

WHEREAS, extraordinary measures are necessary to protect public health, ensure public safety and well being, and provide for the economic stability of the State.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of New Mexico, do hereby declare a state of emergency due to drought conditions statewide;

I FURTHER DIRECT the continuation of the New Mexico State Drought Task Force as outlined in Executive Order 2003-019; and

I FURTHER AUTHORIZE all executive branch agencies of state government to apply for and, if eligible and qualified, receive emergency funds as required to carry out the New Mexico Drought Plan and for such other disaster relief related to drought as set forth in this Executive Order, such funds to be released upon approval by the Office of the Governor based on the recommendation of the New Mexico State Drought Task Force, pursuant to and in accordance with Section 6-7-1 through 6-7-3, NMSA 1978.

This Executive Order supersedes any other previous orders, proclamations or directives in conflict. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as it is rescinded by the Governor.

ATTEST:


REBECCA VIGIL-GIRON
SECRETARY OF STATE

DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
THIS 17th DAY OF MAY, 2004

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

